Meadville Addresses

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The Meadville Theological School

A Retrospect of Ninety Years

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Clayton Raymond Bowen

1877-1934

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The address, "The Meadville Theological School: A Retrospect of Ninety Years," by Dr. Francis A. Christie, was delivered in the First Unitarian Church, Chicago, on October 19, 1934, on the occasion of the celebration by The Meadville Theological School of the Ninetieth Anniversary of its founding in Meadville, Pa., in 1844. Dr. Christie is a Professor Emeritus of the School, having held the James Freeman Clark chair of Church History from 1893 to 1925.

The address, "Clayton Raymond Bowen, 1877-1934," by Dr. Sydney Bruce Snow, President of The Meadville Theological School, was delivered in King's Chapel, Boston, on November 20, 1934, at a Memorial Service to Dr. Clayton R. Bowen. Dr. Bowen died, after a very severe illness, in London, England, on October 17, 1934. On the day preceding the Memorial Service when the address was delivered, the ashes of Dr. Bowen were buried in the Barber plot at Deerfield, Mass. Dr. Bowen had been Professor of New Testament Interpretation in the Meadville Theological School for almost thirty years.

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A Retrospect of Ninety Years

FRANCIS A. CHRISTIE

IN due time the Meadville Theological School will celebrate its century of progress and now on its ninetieth birthday quite properly it begins to estimate its progress by remembering its beginning. What was it in its beginning? In 1844 men pointed to a hastily remodeled building on Center Street, Meadville, Pennsylvania, saying: That is the Theological School. This however seems to be an example of what Whitehead calls the fallacy of misplaced concreteness. That building vanished long ago without the slightest injury to the life of the school. Even before that, the school as an invisible entity had flitted up Chestnut hill to act in the austere dignity of another Divinity Hall, being itself invisible still. When two more buildings were added later, the school was not divided in three parts. It had its entire indivisible unity of being in each structure simultaneously. In view of this curious indifference to simple location, it is not surprising that I have now had to travel to Chicago to find it. Certainly you belong to it and I must speak as if I were sure of your location. You seem to be here in these noble quarters in this vast city on the shore of Lake Michigan.

But the school that flitted in this fashion; what was it? Not a material structure. Its older buildings meekly remain in Pennsylvania to serve unscholastic uses. It was not even a body of trustees, for they continued to live just where they had been. Not a specific group of teachers, nor a specific group of students, for, however necessary they are to the life of the school they are as transient as the snows of yester-year. They come, they go, without constituting the persistent reality of the school. We will not disparage their service by any low estimate of its importance, but the *school* as such certainly is no count

of men or a mass of bricks and mortar. It is something of an order dominant over men and things, using material and actuating men, something that in our vague common parlance we call spiritual, or, taking refuge in the vocabulary of the learned, a subsistence. Our intentions with such a term are good, but, when we remember that "subsistence" is English for the Greek "hypostasis," we fear a relapse into the uncertainties of ancient Alexandrian metaphysics. We are only seeking to express a reality which cannot be enslaved by conditions of space, seeking some term applicable to a school which in certain by-gone summers operated simultaneously in Meadville and Chicago.

Time seems to be more relevant to the case than space, for we are celebrating the ninetieth birthday of the school, having in mind the first assembling of a class or the dedication of the first building in October 1844; yet metaphysically it seems to me more exact to say that the determinate spiritual reality of the school was born ninety-one years ago on a fine autumn day in a mansion called Pomona in the lovely valley which Washington once traversed in peril of his life when the Governor of Virginia sent him to demand the intentions of the French at Fort Le Boeuf, the valley threaded also later by Chateaubriand on his way from Presque Isle to Fort Duquesne and thence on to those simply impossible adventures described in his romantic prose, the valley which haunts my memory and imagination and, as you see, almost makes me forget my story. Well, in that mansion two men conversed. The host was an urbane patrician gentleman, a man of affairs and a man of culture, a man of independent competency in business and intellectual life. He had founded a liberal church. He had published an able exposition of liberal theology. He maintained a home school taught by a succesion of young Harvard graduates later eminent in church annals, and through them he had contact with the New England Renaissance. The guest was the Elder of the church of The Christian Connection in the village of Springboro.

Mr. Harm Jan Huidekoper and Elder Church talked on that autumn day about the need of theological education for the preachers of this undeveloped region of Western Pennsylvania. The talk culminated in a purpose. The purpose was to provide a system of theological training and steps were soon taken for the execution of that purpose. Now we know the identity of the school. That purpose was the soul that doth the body make. That purpose was the invisible reality that gathered visible men and materials for its uses. It was this invisible purposiveness that the Commonwealth chartered and while the legal home of this incorporation remains where it was born, that Commonwealth sanctions the enactment of the purpose now in the scene where we are met. I trust that you agree with me that the true reality, the abiding reality of the Meadville Theological School is such as that which John Hales of Eton claimed for the Church. "The Church," he said, "is not a thing that can be pointed out. It is the glory of it not to be seen and the note of it is to be invisible."

Inevitably this creative general intention took determinate form and that is now the important matter for our consideration. A general purpose can never remain general. It must accept some particularity of character. It has to operate in directions dictated by given conditions, subject to the contingencies of time and place, for as Ecclesiastes says, time and chance happeneth to all men. Men must be its agents and men shape it according to the time and chance of their lot. A little book about the "Makers" of this school limits consideration of the making to its teaching force but of course every student who sat under these teachers shared in the making by his receptivity or his resistant reaction. Nevertheless, the distinguishing character which this instituted purpose assumed is due primarily to the founders and first officers of this school, for they created it as a school of *free inquiry*. When we say that, we say something of supreme significance. Undoubtedly these founders and makers advocated views in those bygone years which you who are met here in this

year of grace would reject as trammels to your spirit; but they made your day possible. A purpose cannot work in a vacuum and the free inquiry which they so nobly planned and secured dealt with religion as it was offered *to them, in their day,* by the great stream of Christian faith which was fundamental to the civilization of Europe and America.

But they conceived it and the civilization which it sustained as a stream, a river of time on which they could voyage on prosperous quests past newer and broader shores. They had no thought of isolating religion and its formulation in theology from the great inheritance of knowledge in all its aspects. The theological school as they conceived it was not to be a slight practical training to lend efficiency to pious fervor in the pulpit, but as the theological faculty of a university of studies. They could only provide theology, but they conceived theology as the crowning enterprise of the whole organism of knowledge. With meagre resources and without prospect for a time of students well schooled as they had been schooled they undertook an institution of the higher learning on the western slope of the Alleghenies where culture was yet unorganized in institutional form and unprovided yet with requisite material support. Rufus Stebbins, Frederic Huidekoper, Oliver Stearns—these were genuine scholars developed by the best available education of their time, trained in Harvard University. They brought to Meadville the curriculum of the Harvard Divinity School and the standards of Harvard learning. Frederic Huidekoper had European training as well and his library, which served at first as the School library, was rich in the productions of German scholarship. For them theological study was based on a discipline in the humanities and science, such as Dr. Stebbins set forth in his magisterial exposition of studies in his inaugural address, (October 24) 1844, and in his survey of Academic Culture, (July 1) 1851. Every President of the School has been a graduate of Harvard College—save Stebbins—who came to the Harvard Divinity School from Amherst College.

Many of the long line of teachers had part or whole of their training in Harvard and many graduates of the School have continued their studies in Harvard class rooms.

Not only thus was a dignified scholarship secured to the School but also a kinship with the ever broadening spirit of intellectual life of Harvard University, and that means also a spiritual relation to the marvelous life of the German university following the founding of Halle, (1674) Göttingen, (1737) and Berlin, (1809). Through its modern university system, dating from the foundation of Halle, Germany won intellectual supremacy over the world and the secret of its conquest was the principle expressed by Von Humboldt when he defined the supreme function of Berlin University as "the free pursuit of knowledge."By sharing in that chartered freedom the Protestant theological faculties in Germany led the world in the emancipation of faith from bondage to fixed and irreformable traditional types of thought and statement. Their University theological teaching followed the path of the scientist—the path of free research—in relative independence of ecclesiastical synods. The Meadville Theological School definitely, consciously, with full intent, began with just that freedom from ecclesiastical control and with just that sacred principle of free inquiry. No doctrinal belief was to be required except belief in the divine origin of Christianity and later, to prevent a narrow and exclusive interpretation of this elastic phase, the suggestion of any espected belief was omitted.

It is of interest to illustrate the freedom with which the school began by the procedure of the three illustrious teachers already mentioned. Like all theologians since the time of the Apostle Paul they argued from Revelation and Reason, but as free inquirers they had their differences of thought and utterance about Revelation and Reason. Dr. Stebbins was a Bible Christian. His doctrinal conclusions were drawn from Scripture but from Scripture as read with rational criteria that separated him from Calvinist Orthodoxy. The Bible as Revelation did not,

however, mean for him a verbally inspired book. It was written under divine illumination but its expression of truth was chiefly poetic, imaginative, emotional, rather than by terms of logical definition. It gave truth in a form to move the heart, to kindle religious experience, and the doctrinal conclusions of Dr. Stebbins were themselves not philosophical constructions but the glowing convictions of a pietist of great emotional power. He had little sympathy with the historical criticism then just emerging. To his life's end he wrote in defence of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, while in contrast to him Frederic Huidekoper analyzed the Pentateuch into Elohist and Jahvist sources and in 1857 printed an illustration of such Biblical criticism. At one point when Stebbins seemed to compromise the principle of academic freedom in dealing with students Huidekoper resigned his chair. Huidekoper indeed was even more insistent on Revelation, but he was a university intelligence and in the field of history he was keen to detect new problems to be solved by new methods of attack. For the solution of these new questions he used an amazing erudition in Greek and Roman literature and the texts of the Early Fathers. He was a pioneer in new monographic inquiries after the German model and while he failed to organize his results in clear and readable form, his extraordinary knowledge of documents has won surprised recognition from such eminent men as Harnack and Emil Schuerer. Their surprise would have been amazement had they known that he was practically blind. Huidekoper was the organizing planner of the school and it was chiefly his high university conception of its functions and its freedom that led to withdrawal of cooperation on the part of the Christian Connection.

In the classroom of Oliver Stearns, who succeeded Stebbins, Revelation and Reason found new and surprising meanings. Herbert Spencer claimed to be the first to use the term evolution and the first to proclaim evolution as a cosmic law. Before Spencer and without knowledge of him Stearns professed belief in evolution as a

cosmic law and he formulated the law in terms used by Von Baer, as did Spencer later. Our boldly adventurous Stearns urged that as a cosmic law evolution must govern "not only Christian theology but that Christian life which gives the law of its forms and the sap of its growth." Meditate on that sentence and you will acknowledge that its implications are revolutionary. If you imagine that this man had simply caught up some attractive diction without concern for its exact meaning, you do not know the Stearns who often thundered at his students: "Next to the grace of God, gentlemen, is the power to distinguish things that differ." He knew distinctly what he was saying. He knew where he was going when he said in so many words that the Christian spiritual experience was an "evolution of the divine life through human nature." He meant distinctly that there is divine immanence in the human process, that as Clement of Alexandria said: God works in the depths of the soul whose powers he employs. Recall the debate between Norton and Ripley, the thesis of dependence on supernatural historical Revelation attested by miracles and the antithesis of truth found by Reason's present intuition; recall that debate and you know that Stearns meant to end the conflict by his "evolution of the divine life through human nature." He had publicly professed this view before he was called to the Presidency of the School and to the teaching of Christian doctrine. Consistently developed his thought would transform and renovate all doctrine. His lectures in Meadville and later in Harvard were not a perfect realization of this, God having provided some better thing for us that he without us should not be made perfect. But it is clear from these instances that the purpose of the institution to teach theology was fully understood to mean the guidance of students into free devout inquiry in harmony with progress in the development of our full cultural inheritance. This has remained the permanent characteristic of the School, and should it cease to remain, the Meadville Theological School will be no more, for its supreme defining function will have lost its being.

It is obvious that in this recital I have rehearsed what is familiar to you all. Fain would I startle you with some brilliant novelty of thought befitting this enterprising city where lamps are lighted by a photon from Arcturus, but at my age invention flags. I comfort myself with Schiller's saying that one's thought is always shared by everybody and only feeling is one's own. (Allen gehöst was du denkst, Dein eigen ist nur was du fühlest.) Now, freedom of inquiry is a matter about which men feel vigorously. You may call to mind that in 1551 the theological faculty in Königsberg were at odds over the question which of the two natures in Christ was operative in man's redemption. In this inquiry there was some limitation to freedom. Professors found it necessary to arm themselves with deadly weapons when they went to classrooms or to the faculty meeting. Professor Stancarus dared not appear on the streets and fled the country. Professor Osiander died and owing to a rumor that Satan had wrung his neck to dispose of a teacher of truth, the authorities had to publicly display his body to show that this was an exaggeration. But Professor Funk, Osiander's son-in-law, poor man, was sent to the scaffold. Things have improved since then. Compare the milder modern instance of our beloved colleague, Henry Preserved Smith, as told by him in his book, *The Heretic's Defense*. His modern views cost him his professorship in Lane Seminary and membership in the Presbyterian ministry, and he certainly felt that keenly. It is a pleasure to say that when he was called to Meadville to instruct us in the Old Testament, no one asked him to change his denomination or to define his theological views. I know that he had a happy feeling about that. But Dr. Smith tells the story of his hampered career with the very gentle temper of one who understanding all was disposed to forgive all.

My exaltation of freedom of inquiry in our school is due to a certain warmth of feeling of my own. You will, I hope, pardon a lapse into what is thus personal if I say that in my earlier years I found some checks to freedom. I met barriers that closed many alluring prospects of a

fondly desired career, but after experiencing the glorious freedom of German universities, after memorable years when I felt myself swept along by the bouyant wave of modern unhampered inquiry, I arrived at the Meadville Theological School with a commission to teach. I was not asked to subscribe to any formula or to refrain from expressing views concerning the New Testament which elsewhere had made me seem a dangerous person. What I found was my very heart's desire. I found there a Faculty of Theology of the German university type, small in number but great in spirit. Its spiritual liberty, its ideals of scholarship made Meadville for me a blessed and desired haven. I belonged to it because of the defining purpose which founded it and was its continuous reality. This is my main theme therefore—mein eigen ist nur was ich fühle—and surely the theme celebrated your own spiritual continuity with what began in 1844 in old Meadville so many leagues away, for you I trust, are like Channing, always young for freedom. I deem it not unfitting to stress this theme for our commemoration since today, in other lands than ours, the passion for liberty gives way to a subservient spirit and the great heritage of knowledge suffers strange distortions.

It is true that to insist on freedom only may be the mark of shallow, restless, eccentric spirits eager only for abrupt, sensational innovation. It is true, as Breasted says in the epilogue of his inspiring work on the Dawn of Conscience, that "the course of true progress is a wisely balanced mean between the lessons of experience and new vision," and Breasted is a noble instance of the intelligence that can offer kindling vistas of man's future progress by a more intense and complete study of man's past. Yet this very study is equally an instance of a scrutiny of the past by a mind wholly free from the bondage of inherited formulas. You who are now thinking of our school need no reminder that its quest of new visions was balanced by a loyalty to man's heritage of spiritual life which has been a safeguard against dangerous caprice. Our school in its quest of truth has reflected throughout

its history the wisdom of Oliver Stearns. He aimed to reformulate theology by an acceptance of present day religious intuition but he also proposed to guard against individual caprice by searching for the true reconception of convictions in the light of the Holy Catholic Church, and if we ask what was meant by that we need only turn to Channing's great discourse on the Church in which an apostle of liberty embraces in his reverence the great spirits of Catholic history. This is to say that the school we celebrate is above all that is sectarian and that it breathes the large and charitable air of what is universal in humanity's holy quest.

Therefore on this day of remembrance we are also animated by a great expectancy. If we have shared somewhat in the transformation of our spiritual heritage we are dedicated by our very past to greater activities and fuller achievement. The purpose which is the reality of our school, the purpose adopted, instituted, shaped by brave and self-sacrificing men will not relax its spiritual persuasion over you and over generations that will follow you.

Clayton Raymond Bowen

1877-1934

Sydney Bruce Snow

AS President of the School to which Clayton Bowen gave his life, (for had he lived a few months longer he would have served it for full thirty years), I should begin with some estimate of him as teacher and scholar. As scholar he had won wide recognition in his field, that of New Testament Interpretation. His most important work, on "The Resurrection in the New Testament," gives evidence not only of unstinting industry but of keen critical intelligence and perhaps is final on the subject. Much of the fruit of his scholarship, however, is fugitive, and must be searched for in the journals published by various learned societies, in which his articles stand forth for the freshness of their viewpoint and the charm of their expression. Professor Christie in the current *"Christian Register"* states that a list of thirty-three titles is probably incomplete. The productiveness although considerable is not, for a man of Clayton Bowen's methodical habit and unflagging power of intellectual labor, large. The reasons when one reads are apparent. To the reader it becomes evident that he wrote not merely to enhance his reputation and to keep his name before his professional associates—a purpose for which much good printer's ink is wasted in University publishing houses,—but because he had something significant to say. Meadville hopes to gather together some of the articles in a memorial volume which will be welcomed by the author's friends and pupils and will doubtless attract attention on its merits outside that circle.

Dr. Bowen's great work in his field, however, was not in his writing but in his teaching. Here he was a master. Professor Hutcheon, his associate of many years, in resolutions recently adopted by the Meadville Faculty, stated that "he did not merely lecture on topics that were

interesting to him as a scholar; he *taught* his subject to students who were preparing for the ministry and who could not afford to spend a large part of their time in discussion of merely technical problems. He had a genius," concludes Dr. Hutcheon, "for helping men to discover what is eternally vital in the literature of the New Testament."

He had a great subject to teach, great in itself, and of supreme importance in the history of our religion and of our race. A sense of this greatness he communicated to his pupils. For the chief character in the New Testament he had a deep reverence and a genuine enthusiasm. In a sermon preached to students in the Meadville Chapel called "Confession of Faith" he said: "I am a disciple of Jesus of Nazareth. I quite understand that in many things we have gotten beyond Jesus. We know more than he about history and sociology and science and medicine and a thousand other important things. But I do not think that we have gotten beyond him in the sphere in which he was supreme, the sphere of religious experience."

This reverence and this enthusiasm for Jesus were central in his own religious experience and were also communicated to his pupils. He was clear and factual in the presentation of his subject-matter, but the vital part of his teaching was its glowing fervour.

Such teaching, as has been often observed, does not win the recognition that it deserves during the teacher's life-time. Only when he dies is the recognition given in full measure (as it has been given to Clayton Bowen in the letters that have come to the school from all parts of the country); but what recognition is greater than the love, even when unexpressed, of those whose inner lives have been quickened, and whose powers have been strengthened? The printed page may be widely diffused and hold a kind of earthly immortality; but who knows how far may spread the influence of guiding thought and experience transmitted from life to life, or how lasting from generation to generation it may be?

It was this fervor which made Clayton Bowen not

only an effective teacher but a persuasive preacher. Preaching is usually best developed under parochial conditions,—the necessity of preparing regular sermons for the same hearers week after week and year after year. Preachers do not usually thrive in academic surroundings, withdrawn from the world. Clayton Bowen served as minister for only two years in a small country church. He was a teacher for practically his whole working life. From the age of twenty-eight until his untimely death at fifty-seven he taught small groups of men in a somewhat restricted academic environment, for during the greater part of his service his school was located far from the great centres of life and education. Nevertheless, he was always a vital preacher. He never succumbed to the temptation that besets one who preaches in many pulpits to thresh over old straw, or to the temptation peculiar to the teacher of giving lectures thinly disguised as sermons. To quote again from the resolutions prepared for the Meadville Faculty by Dr. Hutcheon: "To the Unitarian and Universalist churches of the country he was known as an intense and moving preacher. He could be when the occasion called for it a master of the full-sounding and rhetorical phrase, but his actual preaching was simple, direct and practical. For him religion was conspicuously a personal experience rather than a mere topic of discussion and his sermons always aimed to stabilize and unify faith or to pierce the conscience and arouse the hearers to more strenuous moral living. His voice will be missed in many pulpits," and in none, may I add, more than in this ancient and honored pulpit, where he was on many occasions heard with gladness, and where he had his last engagement to preach, an engagement unfulfilled only because of the sickness to which he finally succumbed.

He was gladly heard, as has been said, in many pulpits, but he was at his best in the pulpit of the school chapel, facing the little group of students and faculty, for the school was his parish, as it is to all of us who teach there. There he had a message to deliver (and a message is the heart of preaching), a warning to sound, a faith to

proclaim to the eager young men who were his charge. The word that best describes that message is the word that has been most frequently used since his death to describe the man—spiritual. It is a vague term; but when Clayton Bowen spoke of spiritual things they did not seem vague, for his words were drawn out of the deep wells of his own spiritual experience. In a sermon already referred to under the title "Confession of Faith," preached in the chapel not long before the School's removal from Meadville to Chicago,—perhaps not unrelated to that removal, for the preacher must have felt that it would bring him and his pupils into an environment in some ways hostile to what seemed to him to be spiritual values,—he set forth explicitly what his religious experience had been. "The ancient creeds and traditional liturgies," he said, "do not at all represent my faith. The functional value of solemn affirmation of my belief in what in my heart I regard as untrue, is to my mind infinitely less than nothing. But such faith as is mine I do like to affirm; especially I like to affirm it in common with my fellows who loyally and enthusiastically share it. So that the free Christian fellowship which is the spiritual home of most of us, though it has no creed, though it bases its association on community of heart rather than on agreement in belief, has the wisdom to furnish us the opportunity, when we gather for common worship, to pour out our hearts together in the affirmation of some of the things which we feel to be the heart of our religion, things so fundamental that they unite us in that moment with every Christian of whatsoever name, nay, which erect no barrier between us and any devoutly religious spirit anywhere.

"Grant me, then, the privilege of confessing here before you (may I not say; with you?) my faith in the central object in my religion, my faith in God, the infinite Father. I would do this as a religious man, I would do it as a Christian, I would do it as a Unitarian. This faith is a characteristic mark of our fellowship. It is the single note which sounds most insistently in the utterances

of our great leaders; it is the recurring emphasis in all our liturgies and forms of worship; it is the one outstanding element in that best expression of the faith of any religious group, our hymnal. It is a faith which sometimes the years and the deeper experiences of life take away, but which far, far more often they bring back. It is youth that feels most keenly the surds of experience, the irrational and irreconcilable elements, and cannot silence the insistent demand for their resolution. The passing years teach that there are more things in heaven and earth than can be set in order, or even dreamed of, in one system of philosophy, and bring the willingness to live in a universe not wholly rationalized, but wholly trusted."

To those who knew the preacher, who knew the tragedy in his personal life, these words were weighted with meaning; this was a true *Confession*. God is sometimes defined as the response to an inner need; his inner need was great, and God responded; to this he could and did give testimony.

Here, perhaps, I should refer more explicitly to the personal tragedy already referred to; for in no estimate of his life and personality can it be disregarded. Probably all gathered here know the facts: his marriage to a woman eminently suited to give the intellectual and spiritual companionship that he needed, his establishment of a singularly harmonious and hospitable home, and the early coming of sickness that took away the home-maker and kept her away during increasingly hopeless years. This was the burden that a man in every quality adapted to the domestic relationship, who needed for complete development home and children (as all do but in some the need is greater than in others), this was the burden that he had to carry during most of the last two decades of his life. Did it at times make that life almost unsupportable? Those closest to him know that it did; they know also how nobly he bore his burden, and how it refined the while it marred his life. With Frances Thompson he might have cried:

"Ah! must
Designer infinite!
Ah! must Thou char the wood ere Thou canst limn with it?"

And with Francis Thompson too have cried:

"'All which I took from thee I did but take
Not for thy harms,
But just that thou might'st seek it in My arms.
All which thy child's mistake
Fancies as lost, I have stored for thee at home:
Rise, clasp My hand and come.'
Halts by me that footfall:
Is my gloom, after all,
Shade of his hand, outstretched caressingly?
'Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest,
I am He Whom thou seekest!'"

In this way was God to him intensely personal, in the only way that I think we are justified in using the word personal of God—that the sense of his presence developed and enlarged his own personality.

I have spoken of Clayton Bowen as scholar, as teacher, as preacher, and of the religious faith that was the background of his achievements in these fields, but I have not yet spoken of what is perhaps uppermost in the minds of those who are gathered here, of Clayton Bowen as friend. For I take it that I am speaking this afternoon chiefly to an intimate circle of his friends. Of what number they were, and of what variety! He had friends among the scholarly the world over—those who shared his studious interests and with whom he was on the common ground of intellectual attainment. These remember him with admiration and mourn his loss. He had friends too—a host of them—among his students, friends who owed much to him in their intellectual and spiritual development, and never let his friendship go, and whom he held with strong bonds of affection through life. Students to him were never passing puppets; they were human beings with whom he established human relations,—not always in friendship, for friendship depends on a certain kinship of mind and spirit which not all possess in common,—but always human relations. In many churches on the Sun-

day after his death memorial services were carried on by congregations that never knew him in the flesh but were made to know him by the friendship in which their ministers, his students, held him. In the School itself, on the day that he died, the present student body by spontaneous action went from their luncheon table to the chapel and held their memorial service,—a service which none of the Faculty attended,—which was described afterwards by one of the students as the most religious service he had ever shared in. From the School where his loss was felt most immediately out to the wide circle of his scattered friends, there was similar outpouring of memory and affection.

But perhaps his most treasured friendships were not with such as these, who shared his special interests, but, covering a wider range, were with what the Book of Common Prayer calls all sorts and conditions of men; for all sorts and conditions were drawn to him as he was drawn to them by sure affinities of heart. At long distance from Chicago, in an old county town, in a Unitarian church whose pulpit is served regularly by a Meadville student. The church is kept alive by a remarkable woman, daughter of a remarkable minister, herself a minister in mind and spirit. To this church, more than any other, Clayton Bowen at great inconvenience loved to go and preach; and in this church he counted many friends. The Chapel of the Meadville Theological School is part of one of the most beautiful Gothic churches in America and Clayton Bowen, with his love of the beautiful, loved to worship there. Many times have I found him in the dusk of a winter evening—a dim figure against a white pier—in the moments before our vesper service in the adjoining chapel was to begin, standing in the back of the church, while the notes of the organ tumbled down from the vaulted ceiling. To such beauty his soul responded. But he could find beauty too and communicate it within the bare walls of the little church in Eastern Illinois which was also to him a shrine.

In Western Massachusetts is a farm about which many

of those present may know. The farm is hard to describe, save as a spirit,—the spirit of mutual helpfulness, that is to say, the spirit of Christianity. On this farm live people of every class—from the crowded districts of New York City and from the homes of the fortunate,—drawn together by a common need, that of spiritual renewal. Clayton Bowen, to whom this farm for many years was a kind of second home, called it the "Kingdom of Heaven." Here he went as often as he could, thinking to get, but rather to give, and in giving to get. Here he gave freely of the treasure of his friendship,—his humor, his love of letters and of art, his bouyancy of spirit, his winning comradeship,—and seemed never to tire in giving. Few there are, of the hundreds who have known him at Gould Farm, who would not count him friend.

How effortlessly he performed the offices of friendship! His post-cards from his many trips abroad had never the effect of perfunctoriness, of being sent to a list. Each was carefully chosen, with due knowledge of his friend's interest. Each bore a message in his beautiful clear hand, often a message that carried with it a laugh, relating to this friend and this friend only. When he brought gifts, though they were simple, they carried the permanent satisfaction of thoughtful and understanding choice. Never by him were neglected, until when remembered they were too late, the letters in time of joy or of sorrow that seem to weed out the shoddy and selfish among our friends. Not with him sprang up sudden friendships to flourish for a few warm months or days, and then in the pressure of new interests to be left to wither. Though he had the capacity to give widely in friendship, he waited and tested before taking a new friend into his heart; but once the place was given it was always there.

Nowhere was his friendliness better expressed than in his own home. He was what we call a born host. He loved an open fire; it is because of this that an informal organization to bring faculty and students into closer relationship in the School, started by his fire, is called "The

White Birch Club." Something in him responded to a fire's glow and crackle; his spirit glowed and his wit sparkled, his personality warmed all whom he welcomed by his fire-side. He loved to give parties, in the good old-fashioned sense of that now misused word—simple old-fashioned parties,—always happy parties because nothing was left to chance; all was carefully and lovingly prepared for. Not his own but his guests' tastes and interests were thought of, their tastes and interests on the highest level. Sometimes there were readings from the poets whom he loved, and whose meaning was made clear by his emotional understanding; sometimes there were games; always there was the spirit of pure fun. Guests were stimulated, but not too much; never tired after a too exacting or boring evening, but refreshed, ready for sound sleep and happy waking. Such are the simple pleasures, the simple delights that mark the intercourse of friends, and that keep alive in us the sweet sentiments, not unmixed with sentimentality, which give color and warmth to life.

Those friends who look back tenderly on Clayton Bowen now realize that he had become what we call "a character." It is among the interesting experiences of life to find that an intimate friend has become "a character." With him as with all that we call by that term, had developed certain crochets and humors, certain knobby ways and attitudes, certain prejudices, quite clearly understood by himself to be prejudices. This man became "a character" by the tenacious way in which he clung to what was old. He liked old things best. He liked old Meadville better than Chicago. He liked the one remaining building of the Columbian Exposition in Chicago, a perfect example of the classic order, better than the gay riot of the new Fair. He liked old masters in art and did not even try to understand the new. He liked old books and old buildings. (One of the assistants in the library said that it taught her something to see the way his hand caressed the covers of old books.) He liked old ways, old manners, old customs, old reverences. He gave

short shrift to what was hasty and smart in the new, perhaps sometimes with too little appreciation of the genuinely inquiring and exploratory in experimentation. Half humorously he was willing to call himself in some matters (generally the non-essential) an "old fogy."

I do not mean to say that he was not a liberal in his attitude to life (the liberal position of his church was part of him); but he was a genuine conservative too, in the sense that he strove always to conserve the values in the old, and was distressed by too sudden change.

We have spoken of him as "a character," and what do we mean by this quaint use of the term? Do we not mean that we appreciate those whom we so designate for their *character*,—that something in them which does not lightly yield to change, which is immovable and fixed? Doctor Hutcheon in the resolutions already quoted states that all will remember Doctor Bowen as a "massive personality." So he was, rock-like in his moral and religious convictions; and the steadying influence of such a personality in such a day as ours upon young men,—doubting, open-minded, seeking hither and yon for the anchor of truth,—though they never shared the convictions associated with the personality, may be counted as of incalculable worth.

Perhaps I cannot better close this part of the address, which deals with the personal side of Doctor Bowen's life, than by sharing with you a tribute spoken soon after his death by one of his closest friends, Doctor Edgar Goodspeed of the University of Chicago. Two days after Doctor's Bowen's death the School celebrated the ninetieth anniversary of its founding, carrying out a program (save for the changes made necessary by death) which had been principally arranged by him. On this occasion Doctor Goodspeed represented the divinity schools associated with Meadville at the University of Chicago. He spoke of the contribution that Meadville had brought, in the beauty of its building, in its faculty, in its chapel services and in its personal additions to the community life. Finally he said:

"I shall always be grateful to Meadville for bringing Clayton Bowen to Woodlawn Avenue. I had long known him as a leading New Testament scholar, but with his coming to Chicago I was introduced to one of the greatest friendships of my life. He embodied the things of which I have spoken,—the aesthetic, the intellectual, the religious, the social. With what glowing understanding he wrote of English cathedrals that he revisited summer after summer!* How importantly he stimulated our department's research, upon which we constantly consulted him, and never without encouragement and positive help. And how he preached! In the Joseph Bond Chapel no one was listened to with more rapt attention than he, and we were half amused and half delighted to have our students ask, Why can't our professors preach to us like that? He embodied in his own experience the deep realities of religion. As President of our New Testament club, he guided the discussion with a poise and skill and a genial humor that made the meetings delightful, and he brought with him that genius for friendship which was perhaps his greatest endowment."

"'I climb the hill; from end to end
Of all the landscape underneath
There is no spot that does not breathe
Some tender memory of my friend.'"

Yesterday a little group of relatives and friends went to Deerfield to bury the box of ashes brought from overseas by the friend whom it was Clayton Bowen's good fortune to have by his side to minister to him during his last sickness. The burial was on a hill-side overlooking the old town, in a grave adjoining that of his wife's father,—his teacher and later his colleague on the faculty of The Meadville Theological School. One of his pupil-friends, and the husband of his wife's sister, most tenderly spoke the words and uttered the prayer that were appropriate to this farewell. As I stood by the grave the thought came to me of a poet whom Clayton Bowen loved, rare editions of whose works in the obscure book-shops which he frequented he had collected, and about whom he had written a delightful essay,—a poet whose lonely life was lived not many miles from that spot,—Emily Dickinson; and with the thought came remembrance of a poem, read

*The Meadville Journal, July, 1932.

at our Meadville memorial service, which I believe expresses his own faith in what by an open grave we are wont to ponder on:

"This world is not conclusion;
A sequel stands beyond,
Invisible, as music,
But positive, as sound.
It beckons and it baffles;
Philosophies don't know,
And through a riddle, at the last,
Sagacity must go.
To guess it puzzles scholars;
To gain it, men have shown
Contempt of generations,
And crucifixion known."